

Mr. OBEY. I will be happy to try to assist the gentleman in any way that makes clear that the authorizing committees need to act, because this is not a matter under the jurisdiction of the Appropriations Committee. I've only been around here 38 years; and on occasions, believe it or not, I've seen an authorizing committee object when the Appropriations Committee invades its jurisdiction.

Mr. DOOLITTLE. And I appreciate that.

Mr. LEWIS of California. I continue to yield.

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Thank you, sir. The problem we have had is, frankly, the authorizing committees, for whatever reason, have chosen not to act. And in that vacuum we've been faced with a crisis of what do we do with the teacher being laid off or in Oregon's case with people being let out of the county jails because they're lacking this funding. We've had to come up with some extraordinary ways to respond to it.

Mr. OBEY. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. LEWIS of California. Certainly. Happy to yield.

Mr. OBEY. Let me simply say, I would not say that it's fair to characterize the authorizing committees as refusing to move. We have only been in charge of this Congress for the last 6 months, and there have been a few other basic priorities, including reauthorization of the basic farm bill that I'm sure have occupied the authorizers. I thank the gentleman for the time.

Mr. LEWIS of California. I'll be happy to continue to yield, but I'd like to take some time as well.

Mr. DOOLITTLE. I didn't mean to imply, Mr. Chairman, that this was just this Congress' authorizing committees. I'm reaching back in time to include the previous Congress as well.

□ 1430

It did pass out of the Resources Committee. And I think the bill passed out handily. But it never cleared the other committee.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Chairman, reclaiming my time, I find this conversation to be very interesting, and I noted that there is a tendency not to accept authorizing language in this instance because of a very specific problem, and because the authorizing committee has not acted. I, frankly, think there are a number of circumstances, including the next amendment that is even more significantly an authorizing problem that probably ought to be stricken as well. But if we are going to be consistent here, let's be consistent. And, indeed, I would be more than willing to join my colleague in communicating with the authorizing chairman in connection with this. But perhaps the time to draw a line is now and say we are not going to authorize in this bill and then see how they respond to us.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MS. JACKSON-LEE OF TEXAS

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment offered by Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas:

At the end of bill (before the short title), insert the following:

The amount otherwise provided in this Act for "The Historic Preservation Fund" is hereby decreased by \$1,000,000 and increased by \$1,000,000.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House of Tuesday, June 26, 2007, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Just a few minutes ago, the full committee Chair mentioned the value of this bill, and I salute the appropriators, the chairman and ranking member of the subcommittee, for the valiant effort that they have made, whether it is about hazardous toxic cleanup; Superfund sites; national parks; historic preservation, where \$102 million is appropriated, \$30 million over the budget of the President, \$30 million over the 2007 mark and \$20 million above the President's request. This is a very good effort, and I want to thank Mr. TIAHRT and I want to thank the chairman of the subcommittee and both the chairman and ranking member of the full committee.

The chairman of the subcommittee just a moment ago mentioned the words "downward trend" in the budget process as another amendment was being debated. I want to bring to the attention of my colleagues the downward trend of historic preservation around America.

My amendment is simple. It is to encourage through reprogramming the National Historic Preservation Fund and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to redouble their efforts to assist State and local governments and community groups in identifying and working to preserve nationally significant sites, structures, and artifacts, particularly those relating to communities founded by newly emancipated slaves such as Freedmen's Town in Houston, Texas, or Tulsa in Oklahoma or the work that was done to serve the pre-Civil War and post-Civil War mansions in Savannah, Georgia, or the meat packing area in New York. We have to be able to stand for preservation in the face of urban renewal, in the face of urban infrastructure that has to be done.

I am hoping the reprogramming of \$1 million will help communities like Freedmen's Town, help the city of Houston to realize that we mean business and the acknowledgment of the

importance of historic preservation. This is the historic Fourth Ward. These are the cobblestone streets that have been laid by the hands of slaves. And just a few days ago, we commemorated emancipation. These are the remaining churches where pastors have dedicated their congregations and their moneys and themselves to historic preservation. These are the streets that have been disrupted.

And what we are hoping by this amendment is that the present project of infrastructure work for clean water, which is crucially important, can be done by the work or the analysis of an engineer that says you can do this on a sidewalk and preserve these cobblestone bricks that were laid by hand by 34 freed slaves who were bricklayers at that time. We know that the repetition of disrupting these bricks will destroy them forever, and there is a community that desires to have this preserved. This amendment, which is a reprogramming, emphasizes the importance of this.

Let us not have a downward trend, if you will, of historic preservation. Many Members have come to the floor with issues of value around Interior and Environment. We want the environment to be safe, but we want the historic environment to be preserved for those who are a valuable part of the historical story of America.

So I would ask my colleagues to support this amendment. It is crucial to the Freedmen's Town community in Houston, but it is crucial to the Tulsa story in Oklahoma. It is crucial to the story of Chicago, crucial to Savannah, crucial to New York, and many other States where we have systematically ignored the historic preservation of our Nation. Who will tell our children the story? I am fighting in Houston. Others are fighting elsewhere. This amendment is to create the historical record, the legislative record, that we are committed to.

Let me thank the committee for its commitment. We know the fund is sizable, but this is an important step. And the funding that was given is an important affirmation of historic preservation, particularly when engineers recognize that you can construct infrastructure work and preserve the historic identity of this community.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak in support of my amendment to H.R. 2643, the Interior and Environment Appropriations Act of 2008, and to commend Chairman DICKS and Ranking Member TIAHRT for their leadership in shepherding this bill through the legislative process. Among other agencies, this legislation funds the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park System, and the Smithsonian Institution, which operates our national museums, including the National Zoo. Most Americans do not know that this bill also funds a very special agency, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and its adjunct, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment is simple but it sends a very important message from the Congress of the United States. The purpose of